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ADDRESS

DELIVERED SEPT. 10th, 1873,

BEFORE THE

Montgomery Co. Agricultural Society

AT ITS

TWENTIETH ANNUAL EXHIBITION,

HELD AT

ROCKVILLE, MD.,

BY

HENRY C. HALLOWELL.

(PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.)

WASHINGTON :

BRIGHT & EAGER, PRINTERS, 401 7th Street.

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ADDRESS.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-FARMERS :

In the absence of the distinguished gentleman who was to have addressed you, I have been requested, almost at the last moment, by our energetic president Elisha John Hall, to make some remarks to-day, and so great is my interest in agriculture that I am willing to undertake the task, notwithstanding I am a farmer by adoption only, and not "to the manner born," and am in the presence of many of those whose practical knowledge has been proved by their success.

Year after year from this platform orations have been delivered, apparently going over the whole subject of practical and theoretical agriculture; still, as we never weary of returning spring, of sunrise, of the face of friends, of anything in itself useful, beautiful, or valuable, so we do not tire of the Annual Fair and Annual Address.

When upon a lofty eminence, no two observers enjoy the same beauties. One sees the distant forest, with varying light and shade; another, the mountains, stretching into almost illimitable distance, suggestive of grandeur, magnitude, and repose; others see the sparkling waters, whitened with sails interchanging the products of differing climes, or with practical minds are interested in the evidences of thrift and energy as indicated by the town, the smoking factory, and passing train. So no two minds, looking over the broad field of agriculture, receive the same impressions, or draw the same conclusions.

from the same results. Even those not so fortunate as to be embraced amongst the number of agriculturists may, for that very reason, present a new idea, or an old one in a new light. The "Scientific American," speaking of a prize of \$100,000 offered for the improvement of steam navigation upon canals, says that inventions have repeatedly been made by those not professional mechanics or engineers, as the latter have their minds in a beaten track or habit of thought from which they cannot break away. So those new to the interesting but somewhat mysterious ways of farmers and farming, or who enter into its delights later in life, may aid in turning us, conservative as we are and averse to change, from some old paths to new and more profitable ones. *All* are, or should be, interested in country life, foundation as it is, of all existence. The country is being agitated to its most remote hamlets by the struggles of the railroad giants in their fierce competition for supremacy. Cities of already fabulous magnitude are extending their areas over the neighboring fields; factories are humming upon a thousand hills and in innumerable valleys—yet, let the farmer fail to avail himself of the blessings of Providence, and withhold his hand for a single season, and the whistle of the engine will be heard no more; grass will grow in the streets of the cities; the hum of machinery will be hushed, and famine will stalk with ghastly form through the length and breadth of the land.

Let us then, fellow-farmers, feel the proud privileges and responsibilities of our mission. To feed the laboring millions, to render possible the achievements of the age, is surely a high calling—a noble life! To do it, we must sow, and reap, and labor, with added intelligence and added industry, and so meet the demands made upon us by the increasing populations. There was a time (now happily passing away) when the young man of energy

and spirit thought his place of action must be in the busy haunts of trade. Farming was thought to be slow, degrading, illiterate. It is true *we may make it so*, and too often do. But to him who enters upon it with a right sense of the place it holds as the very ground-work of society, who looks with broad and comprehensive mind at its possibilities, there will be unfolded a field of labor worthy of the highest intellect, and capable of affording the greatest enjoyment. The proper cultivation of the soil, the knowledge of its constituents, the rotation of crops, the application of fertilizers, the habits of animals, the use of machinery, the choice of markets, these and countless other questions constantly arising, if properly considered and solved, will afford scope for the most active mind. So important is agriculture deemed that in some countries the head of the department is a cabinet officer, and in our own land occupies a high official position, and is bringing his bureau closer and closer into sympathy with us, gathering statistics of crops, information as to diseases of animals, introducing new grains and industries, and aiding us to place American farming in the foremost rank among the industries of the world.

And what other life, taken as a whole, affords so much real enjoyment? We dwell in the midst of the beauty and grandeur of nature. Each revolving spring and each returning day brings us the wonders and beauties of a new creation. Sights, sounds, odors gratify every sense. The pure sun-light and fresh air bring health and appetite that no city can give. The old fable tells us that Antaeus, the son of Terra, the earth, in wrestling with Hercules, was repeatedly overthrown, yet rose each time refreshed and strengthened, until Hercules, finding that at each contact of his opponent with the ground his mother had imparted new strength to him, grasped him in his arms

and held him aloft until conquered. As is often the case, a moral lies half concealed under this old story. Weary and jaded in the contests of life in the cities, thousands flock to the country during the summer season, to gain fresh strength by contact with our common mother. Life-giving, health-preserving, let us then regard her with affection and respect!

In attending to his daily duties, the farmer is enjoying all those benefits, and has them at hand for those near and dear to him, that the toiling citizen sees only in the dim future, when he has succeeded in his uncertain race for riches, and when, alas! Hercules may have held him aloof too long for his mother to strengthen him. This is no flight of the imagination. Not a day passes but I appreciate my privileges as a resident in the country. And though they may not recognize it themselves, these plain and hard-working men, some of whom are around me now, have a love for the pleasures and enjoyments of a country life that no city could tempt them to exchange. It is healthful, independent, pleasant, safe. It has been asserted that 99 out of every 100 persons engaged in mercantile life sooner or later meet with reverses in business. Look over a paper of a half-century past, and you will recognize scarcely a name amongst those who in their day were merchant princes. How different in the country! Generation after generation lives and prospers upon ancestral acres. Look through the limits of our own county, and we find Bowies, Brookes, Gaithers, Stablers, Griffiths, Bealls, Thomases, Pooles, Whites, and many others, living where their fathers lived, useful citizens, good and true men. It is a fact that a farmer's life is not all rose-color. No human occupation is. It is fashionable to talk of the ease of a country life, but it has its stern duties. Skill, industry, and economy are requisite for success, and of these I am inclined to think the great-

est is economy. Not that of the old German who gave as his receipt for buying added acres, "to sell the potato and eat the paring," but the wise economy that prevents waste in its manifold forms—the thousand little avenues by which our substance is dissipated; the machinery and implements exposed to weather, the half-protected stock, the injudicious purchases of untried fertilizers, the loss of precious time by unskilled and undirected labor.

I include, also, in speaking of the healthfulness and pleasures of a country life, not only the farmer, but those who are so closely connected with him and share in his prosperity or reverses—the mechanic, country merchant, and all who, though perhaps only owning a garden plot, still have their interests identified with his.

GRANGES.

A subject is now looming up in the West which will require our most careful consideration. I allude to the movement of farmers, as evidenced by the formation of granges; the object of which is to give concert of action to a class scattered, and therefore hitherto inefficient. There were in 1860 half a million more farmers than merchants and manufacturers together. The number of acres in farms is one hundred and eighty-nine millions. The cash value of land, stock, and implements is ninety-five hundred millions. The amount paid in wages is annually three hundred and ten millions, and yet with all this capital invested, the farmer, from his isolation, has been the prey of extortionate manufacturers* and soulless corporations. The object of the leaders of this movement is professedly to save us from imposition and to give us that voice in the management of affairs that our number and

* The speaker is well aware that many manufacturers of agricultural implements are honorable men, but unfortunately the flimsy and unsubstantial machines sent out by others prove that there are exceptions to the rule.

importance demand. Whether this movement is what we need, each must judge for himself. There are legitimate fields for co-operation, as in the establishment of a neighborhood laundry, which shall take from our housekeepers that bane of their existence—wash day; or we may join in the purchase of implements and fertilizers at first hands. But the arraying of one class against others *as a class*, binding by secret bonds and using the organization as a political power, as has been done in some States, is to me of very questionable propriety.

PUBLIC DUTIES.

This leads me to speak a few words with regard to a duty that is too often neglected, that relating to public affairs. The eyes of toiling millions in the Old World are turning to our shores as a Land of Promise. The fulfillment of their hopes depends upon our preserving the purity of our institutions, and this, upon the virtue, intelligence, and integrity of the people. It is unavoidable that there should be political parties, and every citizen should understand and take an interest in the questions that are constantly arising. I care not what a man's political sentiments may be, if he holds them from principle and maintains them manfully. If honest men do not attend the primary meetings and conventions and see that they are represented by those worthy of trust, our political machinery falls into the hands of the selfish and designing, and the very state of affairs is brought about against which those who have failed in their duty declaim. Let every farmer then, and every other good citizen, do all that is in his power to advance the views he believes to be right, and to be represented by honorable and intelligent men, and, the elections over, all again join shoulder to shoulder, irrespective of party, to advance the common interests of our common country.

We need, to reach a higher development, a belief in the elevation of our calling, and that each should for himself study out those points which seem to him to claim consideration.

With diffidence, and yet as a fellow-farmer with you, I would draw your attention to some of the suggestions which, during my residence in the country, have been presented to my own mind.

DIGNITY OF LABOR.

First. With regard to the dignity of labor.

We hear occupations spoken of as menial, degrading. Fellow-men and fellow-women, no *duty* can be degrading! Those that perform their duty wherever they may be are doing a noble work, however lowly the task. They are worthy of the highest respect. As Dr. Johnson says, "It must be remembered that life consists not of a series "of illustrious actions, or elegant enjoyments. The "greater part of our time passes in compliance with ne- "cessities, in the performance of daily duties, in the re- "moval of small inconveniences, in the procurement of "petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease as the "main stream of life glides on smoothly or is ruffled by "small obstacles or frequent interruptions. The true state "of every nation is the state of common life."

The man who drives his team and turns his furrow to the best of his ability is doing all that man can do—that which the moment requires of him.

The woman who keeps her house and performs the thousand little functions that are necessary in life is vastly more worthy of respect than those who seem to have no conception of the grand possibilities of a useful and healthful existence.

It is true that some, from poor health, ample means, or different fields of usefulness, do not labor with their

own hands; but the moment they abstain from it through a feeling that labor is degrading, there goes out from them their true manliness of character, as Sampson lost his strength when shorn of his locks by the blandishments of Delilah.

Labor need not be separated from refinement and intelligence. I see around me now men and women whom I have met in the performance of the most difficult occupations demanded by farm life, and who will yet rank with any in information, character, and learning. A summer or two ago word was flashed over the wires that a member of the President's Cabinet, known to some of us as an efficient officer, a statesman, and a gentleman, had his arm broken by the overturning of a wagon which he was loading with hay at his home in Ohio, during his summer vacation. What a commentary is this simple fact upon American institutions and American labor! Yes! The true gentleman and true lady depend not upon *occupation*, but upon *self*. Feeling thus with regard to labor, we must respect the feelings of those who labor for us. If labor is respectable, the laborer must be respected. Those farmers and housekeepers who, while demanding respectful demeanor and conscientious work, yet show a sympathy for and interest in their domestics, will find, apart from a sense of duty done, that their days glide more smoothly and more free from those petty annoyances that oftentimes render the details of country life a burden almost too great to be endured.

HEALTH.

But we cannot labor without health. Professor Tyndall says, in an address to students: "Let me utter one practical word—take care of your health. There have been "men who, by wise attention to this subject, might have "risen to any eminence, might have made great discov-

“ eries, written great poems, commanded armies, or ruled
“ States, but who, by unwise neglect of this point, have
“ come to nothing. Imagine Hercules as oarsman in a
“ rotten boat; what can he do there but, by the very force
“ of his stroke, expedite the ruin of his craft? Take care,
“ then, of the timbers of your boat, and avoid all prac-
“ tices likely to introduce either wet or dry rot among
“ them. And this is not to be accomplished by desultory
“ or intermittent efforts of the will, but by the formation
“ of *habits*. The will has, no doubt, sometimes to put
“ forth its strength in order to strangle or crush the special
“ temptation. But the formation of right habits is essen-
“ tial to your permanent security. They diminish your
“ chance of falling when assailed, and they augment your
“ chance of recovery when overthrown.”

Upon the authority of this eminent scientist I would respectfully draw the attention of our young people to the growing custom of extending their evening companies far into the night. Were it possible for you to rest in the intervening time sufficiently to compensate you for the loss of sleep, you might perhaps bear the drain upon your system caused by late hours and exposure to the dews of night. But to labor all day, spend a large portion of the evening away from home, and labor again the following day, is what no constitution can bear. *Sooner or later* Nature demands the penalty for every violated law. I believe recreation to be necessary; but surely we can afford time enough from our daily tasks for enjoyment, and still have ourselves and our oftentimes tired horses home by the good old-fashioned hour of ten o'clock. Young people of Montgomery, pardon my earnestness. I speak to you as one who has known by its loss the inestimable blessing of physical strength. Without it, life is a drag, duty a task, the mind sympathizes with the body, and our capacity for usefulness is abridged.

EDUCATION.

Second. It is of great importance that farmers should realize the benefits of education. It is not only for the information gained, but the culture of the mind enables us to think better upon *all subjects*. The man with well-drilled and well-informed intellect will run a corn-row straighter, drain a piece of land better, and perform all his private and public duties with more satisfaction to himself than one of equal natural abilities without such cultivation. The necessary retirement of country life renders it especially important that the mind should have food for thought. Like the empty mill, it will otherwise waste its own substance. We must see this in its true light, or we will be left behind by the advancing age. Schools and colleges are multiplying upon every hand, the means of acquiring an education are being brought within the reach of the most humble, and it will be inexcusable if we allow our children to grow up without at least a glimpse of the grand and beautiful, and the possibilities of a higher life, revealed and developed by the cultivation of the mind. Our sons and daughters will have more refined tastes and loftier aims. Their daily duties will be better done, and, these attended to, they can commune by books with the good and learned, and take more correct views of the intricate problems of life.

HIGHER CULTURE.

Third. We must understand the necessity for *higher culture*. Every acre of our land must be made to produce the very most of which it is capable. In no other way can we silence the talk of "hard times" now so universally heard. It is no more labor to plant and cultivate a field of corn producing twenty barrels or one hundred bushels to the acre than one producing two barrels or ten bushels to the

acre, yet, how vastly different the profits! The average yield of corn for the whole country for five years was about six barrels or thirty bushels to the acre. Dr. Parker, of South Carolina, raised two hundred bushels and twelve quarts, or over forty barrels, to the acre.* Here is a difference of thirty-four barrels, or one hundred and seventy bushels, per acre—the planting and working costing but little more. How vastly would our finances—State, national, and personal, improve if we would strive for the forty barrels instead of the six barrels, with which too many are content. We must under-drain, add lime, and other fertilizers with open hand, make all the barn-yard manure it is possible to accumulate, and put it where our experience has taught us, after intelligent experiment, it will do the most good. We must keep stock which, when grown to the best size with least expense, will sell for double what some of us receive for the scrawny, long-legged scare-crows that now disgrace our pastures. We must raise sheep, the most profitable animals upon a farm if properly attended to, and put no man in office that will not aid us in their protection from vagrant curs. In this country, with our vast domain, we have not yet learned these lessons. In Europe it is far different. Every scrap of land in the thickly-settled portions of England, France, and Germany, is sedulously cultivated, even the sides of the cuts and embankments of the railroads being in grass or vegetables. Generation after generation adds its portion to the fertility, utilizing every spot that can possibly be made productive. I have seen terraces far up the mountain side where stone walls had been built to hold the earth brought up in baskets on the backs of patient donkeys from the valleys below, each generation adding if possible another little strip to the family domain.

* His land was under-drained, highly manured, highly cultivated, and closely planted. (*Enfield on Indian corn.*)

I may say in passing, too, that their roads are well nigh perfect, and on these may sometimes be seen novel teams. I once met in the Tyrol a fine noble-looking cow harnessed with a handsome well-grown woman, amicably drawing a loaded cart! We must study out the system of rotation that suits our soil and climate. In this latitude a mixed husbandry seems best. If we turn our whole attention to one crop, and it should fail, we are hampered to the last degree. With a mixed husbandry, if the wheat is short, compensation is generally made in hay and corn. If these fail, as they do to some extent this year, the wheat is good. In other words, to use a homely adage, "we must not put all our eggs into one basket." Did time permit, I should like to draw your special attention to the subject of under-draining; not merely the land where water stands, but our whole farms, as far as capital will allow. By this means the ground avoids the extremes of drouth and wet, we would be enabled to work the land sooner after rains, and thus gain valuable time at the most pressing seasons. Above all it gives a depth and fertility to the soil only realized by those who have tried it. I have been told that John Johnson, the celebrated Scotch farmer on Seneca Lake, has amassed a fortune, as he says, principally by under-draining. His whole farm is underlaid with systems of ditches, not only in the lowlands, but upon the hillsides, and now, having raised almost fabulous crops, regardless of seasons, he is in his old age *renting* a large portion of it to nurserymen at \$100 per acre! Some of us, if we had to part with our land, would be glad to *sell* it for that much. If we put in ditches, as some of us try to do, we must remember that they need care, afterwards, Spring and Fall. The mouths are liable to be choked, and should be opened twice a year. We should also walk over the line of the ditch to stop up the holes which frequently wash in

them. By attending to these points they will be serviceable for generations. There are ditches now doing good work upon our farm, put in by my father thirty years ago, and bidding fair to last as long as needed. It would be a great aid to drive a good chestnut stake at the mouth of each ditch when made, as after a year or two it is sometimes very difficult to find them.

PUBLIC SPIRIT.

Fourth. We must feel and cultivate a pride and interest in our county, State, and neighborhood. Maryland, from her climate, mineral resources, bays, water-courses, and soil, occupies the most favored portion of our Union, and Montgomery county has advantages equal to any in the State. Her pure air, good water, rolling hills, her resources and her proximity to Washington will, in time, gather within her limits a large population. Let us, by means of Farmers and Horticultural clubs and exhibitions, by good roads and good farming, make it doubly attractive. The tendency of the farmer is too much to confine himself and his interests within the limits of his own place. This should not be. While he must closely attend to his business, he should still manifest an interest in his community and neighbors, aiding them in procuring better roads, joining them in supporting these Annual Fairs, these Farmers' Festivals, where kindness and good feeling and mutual sympathy are increased and strengthened by commingling together.

PERSEVERENCE.

Fifth. I would say a word or two to those who from failure of crops, difficulty with regard to labor, or other causes, feel discouraged (for I share at times in their depression) and think they would better their condition by

removing to some other place. It sometimes happens that by so doing great advantages are gained. But often it is found when too late that equal or greater difficulties are to be encountered, and that time and money have been lost by the change. I once heard an anecdote that bears so forcibly upon this point that I will repeat it. In the olden times, when faith of a certain kind was more abundant than now, a family believed that they were hampered by the evil doings of a witch. Nothing thrived with them. The butter would not come, the cattle broke into the corn-fields, the tools were scattered, and all went wrong. At length, to get rid of their pest, they determined to remove to a distant place, and when, bag and baggage loaded up, they were upon the road, a neighbor met them and remarked, "Well, you are moving, are you?" Before the man could answer, to his astonishment and consternation, the witch popped its head out of the churn on the top of the wagon, and replied, "Yes; we are moving." I fear many who leave to better their condition find that the hindering witch goes with them. No! Let us persevere, strive harder, farm better, and cast our lots now and henceforth with Old Montgomery.

HOME.

Sixth. The last point to which I will allude is one in which the ladies are equally interested—the comfort and adornment of home. Amidst all the beauties of the country lavished upon us by a bountiful Providence, we sometimes see the charm destroyed by the careless, dreary look of the homestead and its surroundings. On the other hand, neat and tidy buildings, a shady lawn, yards and windows glowing with flowers, a porch half hid in trailing vines—these fill the soul with delight, and bring peace and rest to the tired body and weary spirit. It is but a

little task to plant a tree, to train a vine, to gather together the scattered things that give an air of neglect to places otherwise naturally lovely. I am aware that the farmer is himself to blame, and I appeal to the ladies present to give their husbands, brothers, and fathers no peace until a beginning at least has been made where it has not already been done. The vegetable garden, too, must not be neglected, however busy we may be upon the farm, for a vast burden is taken from the housekeeper when the table is well supplied, and she feels no anxiety about feeding the hungry horde which the hurrying men collect around her—too often without previous notice.

The interior of the house should be made as beautiful and comfortable as a wise economy, with industry and taste, will permit. Pictures, books, and cheerful furniture, as far as justified by our means, should aid in making *home* the most attractive place to which our boys and girls can get. Mothers and sisters and busy wives, by giving a portion of your time and taste and skill to making home happy you will enable those dear to you to say with the poet Montgomery, as once quoted from this platform by my venerable father, whose love for agriculture and his race increases with advancing years:

"There is a land, of every land the pride,
 " Beloved by Heaven o'er all the world beside;
 " Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
 " And milder moons emparadise the night;
 " A land of beauty, virtue, valor, truth,
 " Time-tutored age and love-exalted youth.
 " There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
 " A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.
 " Where shall that land, that spot of earth, be found?
 " Art thou a man?—a patriot? Look around;
 " And thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
 " That land **THY COUNTRY**, and that spot **THY HOME!**"

So, farmers and residents of Montgomery, will it be with us, if we do our full duty as citizens, as cultivators of the soil, and of the mind and heart as well. Our beautiful county will be the home of a happy and virtuous people, proving to the world that the duties of agriculture are compatible with intelligence, refinement, and worth.

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